

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEL AV 00725 281914Z

14

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 ORM-02 IO-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 SAB-01 OMB-01 SCCT-01 /076 W

----- 070170

R 281500Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9954

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 0725

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, LE

SUBJECT: PERES' OFFER TO ACCEPT LEBANESE REFUGEES FINDS NO TAKERS

1. BEGIN UNCLASS: ISRAELI MEDIA HAS GIVEN PROMINENT COVERAGE TO OFFER MADE BY DEFMIN PERES, DURING TOUR JAN. 26 OF JORDAN VALLEY AND NORTHERN GALILEE SETTLEMENTS, TO PERMIT LEBANESE REFUGEES TO ENTER ISRAEL. PERES REPORTEDLY HAD BEEN APPROACHED BY CHRISTIAN ARAB LEADERS IN NORTHERN ISRAEL WHO HAVE RELATIVES IN LEBANON TO OPEN THE BORDER. ACCORDING TO ISRAELI RADIO AND PRESS, NOT A SINGLE LEBANESE REFUGEE HAS SO FAR CROSSED THE ROSH HANIKRA BORDER POST INTO ISRAEL.

2. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL: USUALLY WELL-INFORMED MILITARY CORRESPONDENT HAS GIVEN US FOLLOWING BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS OF PERES' PROPOSAL. ISRAELI GOVERNMENT HAD REACHED QUIET DECISION TO OPEN THE BORDERS TO REFUGEES SOMETIME AGO. THE PROPOSAL WAS NOT JUST FOR PROPAGANDA PURPOSES AND, EVEN IF NO REFUGEE HAD YET AVAILED HIMSELF OF THE OPPORTUNITY, THE SITUATION COULD BE QUITE DIFFERENT WERE FIGHTING TO RESUME. SPECULATING ON WHY NOBODY HAD CHOSEN TO CROSS BORDER, SOURCE OBSERVED THAT ASIDE FROM

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PAGE 02 TEL AV 00725 281914Z

VILLAGERS IN SOUTHERN LEBANON, THE APPEAL HAD PROBABLY

RECEIVED VERY LITTLE DISSEMINATION IN LEBANON. IF REFUGEES WERE TO SEEK ENTRY INTO ISRAEL, HE CONTINUED, ISRAELI AUTHORITIES WOULD NOT GRANT AUTOMATIC ENTRY BUT RATHER WOULD TRY TO CARRY OUT AT LEAST CURSORY INVESTIGATION, PRESUMABLY TO DETECT POTENTIAL TERRORISTS.

3. MILITARY CORRESPONDENT ADDED THAT THERE HAD BEEN A PRECEDENT DURING 1970 JORDANIAN CIVIL WAR. ISRAEL HAD ADMITTED TENS OF PALESTINIAN TERRORISTS, WITH AND WITHOUT WEAPONS, WHO WERE FLEEING FROM JORDANIAN ARMY. MOST OF THEM WERE ALLOWED TO STAY ON WEST BANK (PRESUMABLY WITHOUT THEIR WEAPONS). THE DECISION HAD BEEN ROUNDLY CRITICIZED AT THE TIME. RECALLING THIS EXPERIENCE, SOME HARD QUESTIONS WERE NOW BEING ASKED. FOR INSTANCE, WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF 1,000 PALESTINIANS WANTED TO COME ACROSS THE BORDER EN MASSE? AS FAR AS HE KNEW, THERE WERE NO CLEAR GUIDELINES ON HOW REFUGEES MIGHT BE HANDLED WERE SUCH A SITUATION TO DEVELOP.  
DUNNIGAN

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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**To:** STATE  
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